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SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE

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SFA EYE

Vol. I, No. 4

April 30, 1973

Well folks, keep working on those portfolios and other art works and have a nice summer. Don't forget the party on May 4th.

—Rance Haig, Ed.

ON EXHIBITIONS

This afternoon Carol Baker came by the gallery to seek an alternative to the Exhibition Committee's decision not to schedule a Faculty exhibition during Fall registration. Such an exhibition, she argued, would enable students to make better-informed choices as to which classes to register for, and which to avoid, based upon the individuals assessment of the work presented in relation to his or her choice of areas of study.

One can't entirely disagree with this, yet it is questionable whether an artist's work can give a fair and sympathetic indication of his or her ability as a teacher: The fact that one artist-teacher may be personally involved in a figurative mode of expression and another in a formal or conceptual mode says relatively little about the kind of human being the artist is, and even less of the potential of great rapport and enrichment the artist-student might experience by taking the chance of studying with *any* artist-teacher whose personal committment and experience is greater than his or her own.

This argument can go back and forth, on and on, and in the end can be decided only with the thoughtful consideration of various bordering realities, including space, money, time and logistics. The solution offered by Janis Provisor is a good one: for S.U.C. to operate a continous slide-showing of recent faculty work during Registration time; this can expose *more* work than an exhibition can, and afford a better representation of each artist-teacher's work at far less cost of time, space and money. And, artist-students can base their choice of classes upon the slide show if they want to.

During our discussion, Carol mentioned that certain statements made by me and others (Artist's Committee members) at a recent Governance Committee meeting led many observers to feel that we consider "students" not to be "artists". Let me clear up that misunderstanding: As an artist myself, I consider anyone engaged in the production of works of art to be an artist, whether they also be teachers, students or anything else; the important consideration made in organizing exhibitions is the quality of the artist's work, and not the prestigious exhibition record, credentials or social or economic status of the artist. Since the San Francisco Art Institute Exhibitions Program is primarily responsible to all the artists of the Greater Bay Area, works by artists from distant areas are considered with the same care and sense of appropriateness for exhibition as works by artists working in the studios of San Francisco Art Institute. It is part of my job to visit the studio of any artist who invites me to do so; only by seeing great quantities of work am I, or any curator, able to discern degrees of quality in the work and accumulate and assess this information for future use in planning exhibitions.

The word "quality" in reference to Art is one which invites long and heated discussions, such as I cannot enter here. I can only say that, in this particular stage of the evolution of our competitive society, and given the disproportionate ratio of artists to gallery space, curators are forced to abide with a system of qualitative judgement, and must strive to show the "best" examples of all modes of visual art. This system also prevails in the Rock Music World, the Literary World and woth Western-Culture Worlds inhabited by working artists.

I'm trying to work for a change for the better — I think everyone here is in one way or another. It would be better, for example, if there were more exhibition space available for many more artists to show their work, a place to put it up for others to see and respond to it freely.

Existing exhibition space at the San Francisco Art Institute is inadequate to serve the present needs of the artist community, so alternatives must be sought. I'd be happy to hear from anyone with ideas on the subject, and on other subjects too. I suspect we all have a similar ideal in mind, and we must communicate and work together to realize it.

— Phil Linhares

$$$ AGAIN

On April 29th there will be a meeting for all the trustees of the participating schools of the Union of Independent Colleges of Art. The Student Unity Council has appropriated funds to send the two student trustees to this meeting. One of our prime functions will be that of fund raising. This summer a semester's tuition will be raised to $900. We would like to believe that tuition will be remain at $900 for several years, but that is a doubtful possibility. Part of the uniqueness of the Art Institute in terms of education and creativity lies with the fact that this school is not a parent supported institution. Out of 675 full time students, 230 are on loans, 150 are receiving scholarship assistance, 63 were granted full tuition waivers, plus 135 receiving the G.I. Bill. Raising the tuition again could be disastrous to maintaining the financially independent student. The alternative to increasing income by a tuition raise is fund raising. This year 150,000 dollars will be raised through fund raising efforts, and additional funding is essential in the upcoming years. Unfortunately, it is a difficult task raising any money for an art school, let alone meeting our future needs. At the Trustee's Meeting there will be representatives from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations among others. Their function will be to explore funding possibilities with UICA as a whole. That will not prevent them from granting money to individual schools. We intend to speak to these people, whether our words mean anything to them remains to be seen. Hopefully the fact that we will be the only students present will act in our favor.

There are approximately 7,000 students attending the nine UICA schools, and yet there will be only two students present at the general trustee's meeting. It is essential that we encourage student representation on the Board of Trustee's of all the UICA schools, and in turn participation in the annual meeting. This matter will also be emphasized at the UICA student representatives meeting in Chicago in December.

And lastly, we will gather information concerning existing and proposed programs within UICA, and at other schools, means of exchange, funding possibilities with the National Endowment for the Arts, and any information that can possibly further the education at the Art Institute.

— Robert Kaufman
Will Blosser

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to and from the painting department

In childhood we have been raped by word pictures. We must revolt against all word authority. Our only language is vision.

—David Smith

SFA Eye
Letters to the Editor

Dear SFA Eye and Jerry Sisco:

Thank you for your comments about first semester graduate students' insecurities about TA assignments in their second and third semesters. Appropriate information will be sent to all graduate students henceforth.

Sincerely,
Fred Martin
Director of the College

INTERDEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

There is no way to completely explain any course but one can attempt a beginning exchange.

The Interdepartmental class is required of all entering students. It was felt by the administration, the accreditation committee and a part of the faculty that some sort of orientation should be offered to newly entering people – (Because some of these students will have come from other art schools – a separate section, this fall has been added – that will concentrate on interdepartmental and intermedia attitude).

Last year interdepartmental studies had a different system that proved to be ineffective. This year we have tried a new way.

Each group of 20 or less meets once a week for 2½ hours for one term with two faculty members. One instructor from that student's major area and one from the World Studies faculty.

There were general goals for all the classes:

–There should be physical orientation to the school.

–Pertinent institutions (such as museums) should be visited.

–Student work should be looked at.

–A sense of mature critical dialogue should be begun and developed.

–Studios of working artists should be visited.

–Special discussion forums should occur in the area of the student's major interest.

–Study plans are also fitted by the various teams – these usually deal with special projects or individual specialized interests that the two faculty guides might bring to the group.

It is assumed by term's end that the group will more cohesively know each other as this is one of the few experiences they have to formally know each other, or others that they don't have in specific studio classes.

It's also hoped that there would have been intense discussion or project work that would accelerate everyone to a more mature position.

Critique – There always is a feeling from some that one doesn't have to high-school hold hands – "one should do it oneself". However that assumes that a school can or should do nothing. The program assumes that it can help.

Critique – Why does one have to take the course? The Institute feels it would be helpful. It represents only one thirty-second of all the courses to be taken. One does not choose every course one wants. Some are given. I personally hope SUC is just as critical of the other 31/32 of their classes.

Critique – Why should I pay for it? SFAI could say give it free – but it is always paid for in one way or another.

The major criticism should be does it do a good job of stimulating, informing, bringing people together in a vigorous mature art school environment?

Obviously much depends on the faculty and the form. Both of these factors are on review and interdepartmental meetings (to which SUC has always been invited) are the only ones that I know of that seriously discusses class attitudes and methods.

I think that in spite of difficulties – as no group is perfect or perfect to others, we should be clearer this fall as to whether our present method is effective.

It is possible to orient in a short time – but a full term enables a group to cohesively develop and proceed beyond a preliminarily digest level.

To seriously criticize this program – (beyond having gone through it), please talk to *more* than one student out of one class or one faculty member.

–Ivan Majdrakoff

The possibility that the required interdepartmental seminar may be obsolete is growing ever stronger. The course seems to have no real purpose for being. Oh, some have been revealed: The seminar is to acquaint us with the school; the seminar is designed to keep people from dropping out; the seminar is a built-in buddy system – for a mere 200 dollars you acquire a group of friends.

First, there is no need for a class to acquaint us with the school. To obtain a BFA one must take some six courses outside of the major. There you are, inevitably acquainting yourself with the school.

Due to the fact that the seminar has no stated purpose, they often become rambling, endless, ill-vibed hours. It is ludicrous to think that these abyss experiences would do much convincing to keep the discouraged students from dropping out.

I'm not sure we really need to spend 200 dollars to get to know someone here. Since we each have 3 other classes, chances are one would meet fellow students anyway. Yet the purpose of SFAI is not to make us lively, socially functioning personalities.

The seminars seem to be elaborately-titled time wasters. They are neither humanities or general majors courses. They certainly aren't *inter*-departmental as we never seem to have anything to do with another department. Basically, they can't even be called seminars. Seminars should, ideally be small groups. These classes usually involve some 30-40 people, a small handful of whom regularly show.

The seminars exist without purpose. Perhaps, at one time they were a necessary part of the curriculum. Now they live as an excuse to keep beginning students out of studios or productive environments. They should certainly be reviewed and reassessed. Since institutions are concerned with constant improvement, it might be wise for the administration to look into the seminars. Surely, they wouldn't allow such a strong null/negative force to exist as an integral part of an Art Institute education.

– Sharon Golden

HELPING NEW STUDENTS

In the San Francisco Art Institute catalog for 1973-74 the course description for the first year Interdepartmental Seminar reads as follows- "... . informally organized, varying from section to section, this course is meant to introduce you to both the formal and informal aspects of SFAI, to the art world of the Bay Area, and to the spirit and character of the creative community of central California which has made San Francisco famous around the world as a creator of the future."

Unfortunately, there is a vast gap between the noble intentions of the World Studies Department and what actually occurs in the seminars. The seminars are indeed informally organized, if at all, and vary greatly to extremes between sections. Although some sections may have been enlightening, mine left much to be desired. We had some great times- drinking wine in the park, playing around with videotape, and looking at each others' work but I resented paying a mandatory $200 for things I normally do when I'm not in class. If next year's seminar is anything like last year's IDS, a new student could learn more about what the school and city have to offer from a Muni route map.

For example, a new student gets the impression that Diane Harsh and Alice Erskine are the Art Institute. I first heard of Fred Martin when I took his second semester Art History class. Fred is a very personable, articulate fellow and I just wondered where they had been hiding him, especially after I found out that he was the director of this institution. Most students recognize that there is an appalling lack of communication in this school, most particularly between the various departments. Generally, after a year at SFAI, a person gets to know the other students and instructors in their respective sections quite well, but the other parts of the school are still alien to them. Such insularity endemic in large state universities is ridiculous in a small art school like SFAI which should thrive on the exchange of concepts within the fine arts. Strange as it may seem, one of the best learning resources at the Institute are those other crazies you see milling around the building.

I would like to make two suggestions:

(1) Make the IDS more effective by mixing new students from all departments in each section so they can meet people outside their major. Provide through the instructor, more information about the school, the classes it offers, and the moveable feast that is San Francisco. Assign an undergraduate student to each section as an advisor who can provide necessary information both in and out of class. Instructors aren't always accessable and a teacher living in Mill Valley wouldn't always know the best places to boogie in the city.

(2) Have students assist in conducting a one day orientation for new students. (between registration and the start of classes) to introduce them to the school and faculty. Orientation would be an opportunity for the Student Unity

Council, Third World Students, and SFA Eye to demonstrate that students do have a voice in the school and to enlist their support. Finally, top this off with a large party for new people some place away from the school.

The first suggestion is an administration/faculty affair but the second is an all student project. Any students who would like to help with orientation next fall are invited to leave their names and summer addresses with Diane Harsh. SFAI can be a vital, interesting community, but only if the students make it happen.

—Peter Seel

CALENDAR

Party — The end of the year party will be held on Friday, May 4th from 5:00 — 10:00 p.m. in studio 14 and courtyard. There will be a band, beer, wine and food, and plenty of good times for all. Admission is $1.00 at the door. Each student is allowed one guest. Hope to see everyone there!

Graduation — Graduation ceremonies will take place on May 13th at 3:00 p.m. in the auditorium.

Spring Show — Anyone who is interested in putting some work in the spring show should contact your department chairman for full details. Photo students should bring your work to the photo lab between May 5—12. Spring show opens May 13th at 3:00 p.m. Student work will be shown in all three galleries, Antholl McBean, Emanual Walter, and Diego Rivera. Also the following studios are used: 8, 13, 14 and 16.

Canyon Cinema —

May 3rd — Lenny Lipton's *Life on Earth* plus another new film *Dogs in the Forest*

May 10th —

Interior with a View by Ken DeRoux
House Construction, Home Movie by Richard Brick
Tribal Home Movie by Loren Sears
Visit to Indiana by Curt McDowell
City by Jon Jost
Celebrations of the Everyday by Victor Barber
My Neighborhood by Kurt Heyl
Still Life by Bruce Baillie

Hey, here are the addresses of Hong King Camera dealers, these listed are tested and reliable. Any Questions see Bob Mayhew, or leave question in Photo News Box, on the downstairs Photo Office wall.

1. Dickson & Co.
   P.O. Box K-3979
   Kowloon, Hong Kong
2. Mutual Funds Company
   P.O. Box K-3265
   Kowloon, Hong Kong
3. Universal Suppliers
   P. O. Box 14803
   Hong Kong

Write to these addresses and ask for the Photo Catalogues, some take 2 Months to arrive.

Imogen Cunningham is 90. Seems surprising that a person of 90 can still be as active and as productive as ever? It's not surprising if you know Imogen and her background. She comes from a family of long lifers and strong characters. She at 90 years old is probably producing more quality negatives in a month than most of us produce in a year. But why not, an active and creative mind does not cease to create simply because it is 65. One's life forces do not stop just because one reaches retirement age.

Imogen is to say the least, a soul full of vinegar, she has a quick wit and snappy vocabulary. Recently at a photo workshop she was talking with a friend of mine and asked my friend how long she had been in photography, and if she really was a photographer or just playing make believe. My friend replied about 3 years, at that Imogen turned and snapped back, "not long enough, simply not long enough!" I asked her later what she thought of photography classes and she said that one should just go out and do it rather than wasting one's money. This is the typical "go out and do it" attitude that Imogen has. And she lives what she preaches, anyone with a quick eye can spot her darting about San Francisco with her Rollicord around her neck and the tell-tale red hat that never seems to leave her head.

Imogen started photographing in 1901 when she sent away to the International Correspondence School for a 4x5 View camera and a course of instructions to go with it. Photography has felt her provocative presence ever since. She was a member of the famous f/64 group which was dedicated to the sharply defined image, and is the only living female of that group. Her book *Imogen Cunningham: Photographs* has been a large success and seems to be the possession of every serious photographer. In her book she has included portraits of well-known people like Martha Graham, Alfred Stieglitz, Upton Sinclair, Amedee Ozenfant, Man Ray and Ruth Asawa. She also has included many of her flower photographs which help to lighten the flow of the book, with their delicate beauty. Her list of shows is long and goes from here to New York and back again, many times over her 72 year career.

Imogen is truely an individual, surprising, energetic and very much alive. She has the energy to be a success at anything she chooses, but I think we all can say that we are glad she chose photography.

—Bob Mayhew

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Editor: Rance Haig
Assistant Editor: Susy Shaw
Staff: Valrie Massey, Will Blosser, Carol Baker, Bob Mayhew, Jerry Sisco.

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CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER
to quote Ms. Alice

If the editorship of SFA EYE is sexist (as suggested by M. Savage, in the April 13th issue) then the recipies may have been meant for the male readers and all other items by and/or about women are a subtle form of inside humor.

The most "sexist" item to appear in SFA EYE since the present editor has been editor was the reprint of the *Chronicle's* Question Man Column ("Are You a Breast, Leg or Derriere Man?", Feb. 20, 1973). In that article only two of the questionees mentioned the gender of the ideal anatomically proportioned individual as being female. The other five could have been thinking of males.

The filler on the front page of the March 30th issue is too bad to rate a comment.

The publishers of most periodicals charge more for advertising rates for the back page than any other on the principal that it is the second most important location in the periodical (advertising rarely appears on the front page).

Why is it that women have three appelations to determine status, i.e., Miss, Mrs., Ms.; while men have only one (not counting Master, formerly used to denote a boy)? And, why is it that the women's movement has chosen as as a symbol of their womenship the age old abbreviation of MANuscript?

— A Human Chauvinist

Why are women soft? Why are men soft?
WHY ARE YOU SOFT IN THE HEAD? WHY ARE YOU SOFT IN THE HEAD(S)?

I've never been able to compare a person to a comfortable chair or a meatloaf eaten 10½ months ago, or a homemade pie. All I can say is John Christian Anderson, you've been reading too many fairy tales.

What you write is insulting, but I must say it goes along with the consistently sexist views of the paper for which you have written.

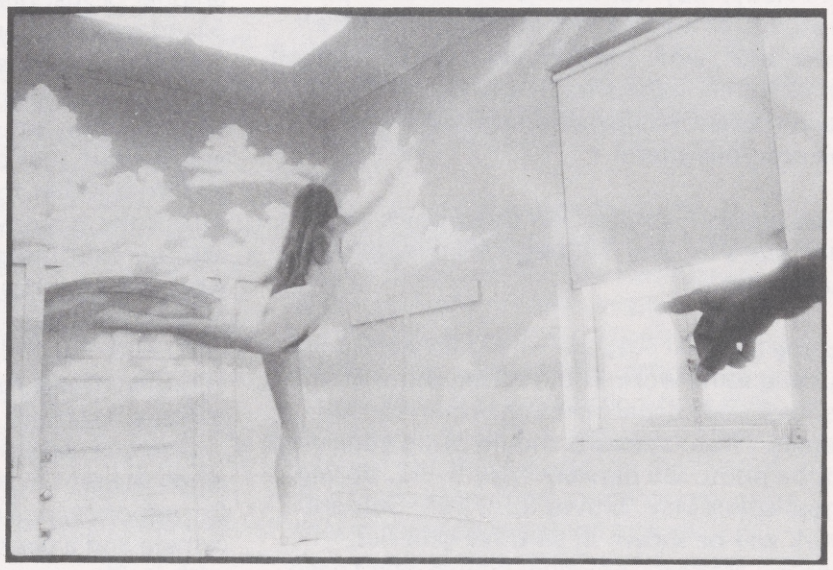
Hey baby what are your measurements? You've got nice legs. A little flat chested, but you'll do. Frankly I'm an ass lover so yours will do in a pinch.

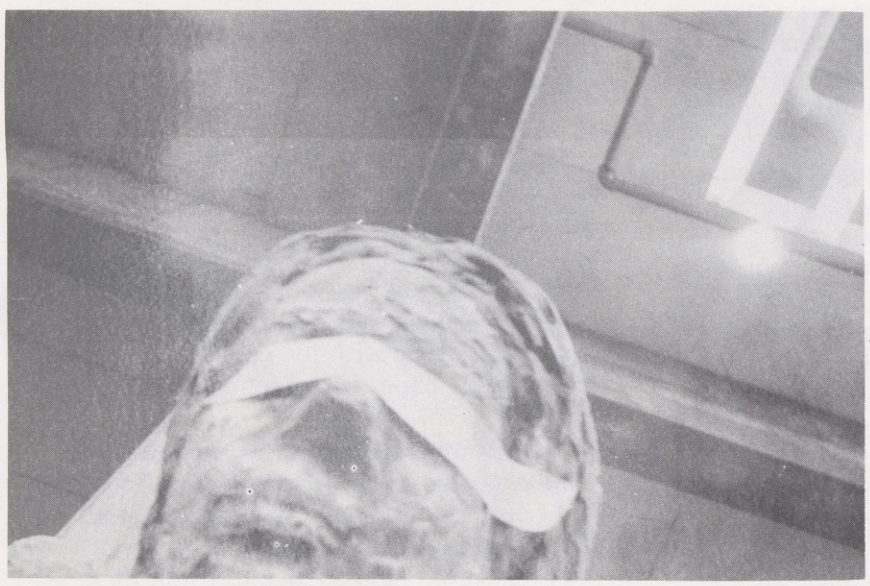
I realize I must be naive to think that your mentality and that of the people who chose to publish certain articles in the SFA EYE is one existent only in fairy tales. Unfortunately it is alive and well and manifesting itself in most advertisements (look at a photo magazine; which object is displayed with the equipment?) and in a lot of art (when was the last time you saw a male model being used?).

I want to hurl a string of obscenities at you but it would only release the intense anger I feel towards you for writing something which is so blatantly insulting and demeaning.

You've done it well, boy.

—Joanie Olson





YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW?